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ABSTRACT

Intended to promote and describe service learning at Arizona's Pima Community College (PCC), this handbook reviews the roles of teachers and students and provides tips for incorporating service learning into the curriculum. Following an introduction, the mission of service learning at PCC is described, indicating that it emphasizes community service and reflection about that service to promote meaningful learning about the community served, civic responsibility, the self, and coursework. Next, an overview of service learning and Center for Service Learning (CSL) at PCC's West Campus is presented, describing intended outcomes of service learning and six elements of an effective program. Strategies for incorporating service learning into the curriculum are then provided, focusing on classroom options and the use of cooperative efforts and internships, and the logistics of teaching a service learning course are addressed, including time commitments, transportation, placement, and communication among participants. Following a description of teaching strategies and supplements, including assessment methods and the use of journals as a vehicle for reflection, five key roles of the CSL are reviewed. The faculty member's role in ensuring an effective service learning program and students rights and responsibilities in the process are then listed. Finally, the role of supervisors at community agencies is described. (HAA)

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PimaCommunityCollege

Service Learning Handbook

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"I read and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand."

Confucius

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Service Learning Handbook

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Introduction

Service learning has a historical foundation dating back to the earliest times. What is now called experiential or service learning was commonly called apprenticeship or simply the handing down of responsibility and knowledge. Service was a common duty of everyone within the community. While the concept is not new, changing conditions within the workplace, the family, the educational system and our community have fractured valuable connections between service and learning. Currently, a national trend reconnects these elements and exemplifies the fact that service learning builds and strengthens communities.

Service Learning is being advanced by the Center for Service Learning at Pima Community College-West Campus with the assistance of participating faculty, students and administrators. I would like to acknowledge the very important pioneering efforts in the field of Service Learning of Brown and Stanford Universities and Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service, along with Sue McAleavey of Mesa Community College and her predecessor, Neil Merrell, who generously provided materials and some of the practices that we employ at Pima Community College. Special thanks go to Dan Gregory who, as a student at Pima Community College, recognized the need and benefits of service learning. Dan's untiring effort, along with the support of President J. Graham Smart, Dr. Candido Mercado and Mr. Mark Homan, led to the establishment of the Center for Service Learning.

The purpose of this guide is to encourage students, faculty, agencies and administrators to view service learning as an exciting way to teach, to learn, to fulfill program needs and to connect with the community. Service learning, therefore, represents a win-win-win-win situation! Thank you for your interest and participation in service learning at Pima Community College. I look forward to your comments, suggestions, and continued contribution to service and learning.

Frank W. Soltys, Educational Program Coordinator
Center for Service Learning

Our Mission

"Service Learning" is the operative concept behind "co-ops," "field experience," "clinicals," "internships" or "practicums." Meaningful real experiences make for effective, reality-based education.

Internships or co-ops are generally within a student's major or a closely related discipline. These programs are designed to give students "hands on" experience that applies classroom learning to the real world. At Pima Community College, internships/co-ops may also be exploratory in nature, allowing students to determine if they really want to pursue that major by experiencing occupations available within that degree area.

Service learning experiences are designed to allow students to serve public or community need within or outside of their major course of study. The emphasis is on volunteerism or community service, and reflection on that service, to promote meaningful learning about (1) the community served, (2) civic responsibility, (3) self, (4) coursework.

Through this introspective process, valuable benefits to the community are also derived.

Whether it's called an internship, co-op or a service learning project, the Center for Service Learning hopes that by serving and learning about the community, students will get involved. One of our objectives is to provide information and opportunities for personal growth and to help meet community needs.

Our mission is to **unite students, faculty and agencies and serve as a catalyst for personal development, civic responsibility and educational enhancement while addressing important community needs.**

Overview of Service Learning

Service Learning benefits both the community and the student participants, with the primary focus on helping fulfill community needs. Two primary outcomes of service learning are (1) meaningful service to the community and (2) meaningful experiences for the student learner. These outcomes are linked together and made possible by **reflection**. Combining Service and Learning (Kendall and Associates, 1990) points out that "Service learning programs emphasize the accomplishment of tasks which meet human needs in combination with conscious educational growth."

Service-learning refers to the process of incorporating student volunteerism within an academic framework while providing needed service to the community. Service learning is a means whereby an environment for students to have a tangible and lasting learning experience is created.

The Center for Service Learning (CSL) is focused much like service learning programs themselves, on accomplishment. We believe that in order to be successful, service learning programs need clear organization, communication and commitment. Elements of an effective service learning program, according to Kendall, include:

1) Engaging people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2) Providing structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their experience.
3) Articulating clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.
4) Clarifying the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
5) Training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.
6) Commitment to program participation by and with diverse populations.

The Center for Service Learning is anxious to work with all parties to help accomplish its purpose. As a college, our mission is education. Service learning is a positive and effective teaching method. Service learning must address the following criteria in its delivery: (1) Measurable objectives including evaluation should be part of the educational plan. (2) Appropriate activities or experiences must be identified. (3) The learning should have economy of time and effort so that the objectives to be learned can be considered within a given time frame. (4) Student reflection (e.g. keeping a journal) is fundamental to making observations that lead to taking action. (5) Service learning is an especially appropriate pedagogy for courses that emphasize performance skills and/or social awareness components which are best developed through participation.

Incorporating Service Learning Within The Curriculum

Instructors may integrate service learning into courses in a variety of ways, ranging from brief observational assignments to more in-depth volunteer opportunities and internships.

For example, an observational or introductory service learning assignment may involve the student's interviewing an agency director and presenting this information to the class. The objective of an observational assignment is to increase the student's awareness by exposure to the community and by reflection.

A. Class Option

A more in-depth class option may involve 15 to 20 hours of volunteer work and a written assignment. Although there is a great deal of variation in the use of this component, the Center for Service Learning recommends appropriate structure to ensure educational integrity.

Service learning may be appropriately and effectively integrated across the curriculum. Consider the following examples by discipline:

1. Accounting students may assist low income individuals with their tax returns.
2. Biology students may assist in environmental preservation efforts.
3. Education students may assist children with learning difficulties.
4. English or reading students may assist in adult literacy programs.
5. Nursing students may assist in hospice care.
6. Psychology students may assist a crisis intervention hot line.
7. Political Science students may assist elected officials or public agencies in a variety of capacities.

Service learning course options may be offered as an alternative to more traditional classroom assignments. For example, students may have the option of participating in a service learning project instead of writing a research paper. Regardless of the discipline, service learning projects should be related to the course objectives.

B. Co-ops and Internship

Cooperative education programs and internships at Pima Community College provide students with an opportunity to supplement their academic studies with career-related work experience. These classes are an excellent vehicle for service learning activities. Specific information regarding Cooperative Education requirements may be found in the Pima Community College catalog.

Whether it's called a "co-op" or a "service learning experience," there is definite **value** in the service performed which should be acknowledged and respected by all parties involved. To this end, the Center for Service Learning provides an important link among students, faculty, the College, and the community.

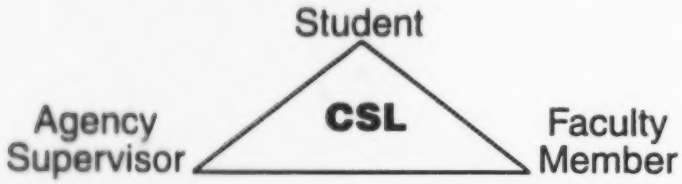
Logistics

In teaching a service learning course, or incorporating service learning into a class, some logistical considerations emerge. A few of these include responsibility, time, transportation, placement, communication and liability.

Students must understand the time commitment involved with volunteering. Often students report that they spend twice the amount of time they had anticipated in travel and preparation time for the course, and end up volunteering additional hours. Students generally have transportation to and from the volunteer site, but it should be confirmed that they understand commuting time as well.

One of the cornerstones of an effective service learning project is selecting an appropriate placement. The Center for Service Learning, in conjunction with the Volunteer Center of Tucson and other agencies, will assist in identifying sites or organizations where service learning can be experienced by our students. For a current listing call 884-6915. Students should clarify their goals and objectives for volunteering and become familiar with the agencies available. This will help to ensure a beneficial match for both the student and the receiving agency which typically assumes liability for student volunteers.

Another issue vital to service learning is communication. Communication must be maintained among all individuals involved in the service learning "triangle" outlined below:



The Center for Service Learning is a valuable resource that serves as a catalyst between students, faculty and community agencies.

Teaching Strategies and Supplements

In all classrooms, learning is the objective, and in service learning projects, experience is the vehicle through which learning occurs. Two aspects which are significant in service learning are student evaluations and meaningful reflection. Several evaluation methods are available through the Center for Service Learning.

One method of assessment (primarily used in long-term placements) is for the student volunteer to be evaluated by the agency supervisor. This can be done at midterm and at the end of the course. Sample progress report forms, check lists, journal materials, as well as other forms used to promote good communication by all parties, are available from CSL.

Other effective evaluation methods can include direct observation of (or by) the student at the volunteer site, class presentations, and student self-assessments. Exams can address not only lecture material, but volunteer encounters as well. An analytical paper is also a very useful assessment tool.

In any event, **learning by experience requires thoughtful reflection about those experiences,** and is not automatic. A useful reflective tool is a daily (or weekly) journal. The journal is the vehicle for reflection, and reflection is the key to effective service learning. In their journals, students might reflect on any of the following:

1. What do you do on a typical day at you placement?
2. How has this changed since you first began there (different activities, more or less responsibility, etc.)?
3. Tell about the best thing that happened this week: Something someone said or did, a feeling, an insight, a goal accomplished.

4. What is the most difficult part of your work?
5. What thing (or things) did you dislike most this week? Why?
6. If you were in change of the place where you volunteer, what would you do to improve it?
7. If you were the supervisor, would you have the volunteers do anything different from what are doing? Would you treat them differently?
8. Tell about a person at your placement whom you find interesting or challenging to be with.
9. How do people see you there? As a staff member? A friend? A student? What do you feel like when you are there?
10. What did someone say to you that surprised you?
11. What happened that made you feel you would (or would not) like to do this as a career?
12. What kind of person does it take to be successful at the kind of work you do as a volunteer?
13. What did you do this week that made you proud?
14. Tell about some things you learned as a result of a disappointment or even a failure.
15. Think back on a moment when you felt especially proud, happy, or satisfied. What does that tell you about yourself?

Journals should not be simply a chronology of events. Rather, writers should ask questions such as **"How did it make me feel?"** to analyze the situation, and then move towards synthesizing the situation/information by taking action (i.e. **"What am I going to do about it?"**)

Role of the Center for Service Learning

1. **Serve as an information and coordination site for community service learning opportunities.**
   a. Identify new and existing opportunities/agencies for students participating in service learning.
   b. Inform and encourage students to avail themselves of valuable opportunities in service learning.
2. **Assist faculty in the development of service learning course options, modules and/or projects.**
   a. Develop and distribute sample materials for project development, application, evaluation, and student record forms.
   b. Consult with faculty to assist in the development of service learning opportunities within their disciplines.
3. **Assist students in obtaining appropriate assignments with community agencies.**
   a. To encourage students to become life-long, contributing members of the community.
   b. Maintain mutually beneficial relations between the community and the college, and quantify the value of student service.
4. **Help to coordinate the academic requirements among the student, agency and college.**
   a. Provide faculty, student and community agencies with guidelines and directions to ensure a clear understanding between participants regarding their duties and responsibilities.
   b. Provide opportunities for feedback from participating groups to encourage improvement of the program.
5. **Share its experience with other educational institutions in order that service learning and community service become an integral part of education at all levels.**
   a. Participate in national, state and local conferences and meetings to promote the concept of service learning.
   b. Share the information and experience gained by the students and faculty with the community in order to continue making a positive impact within the community.

Role of the Faculty Member

The faculty member plays a key role in establishing the value of the service learning opportunity by enhancing the educational experience of the student. Faculty members are encouraged to work closely with the Center for Service Learning. In doing so the faculty member's participation may include the following:

1. **Assisting students in locating appropriate agencies for internship or service learning experiences.**

2. **Developing an educational plan with students/agency that includes appropriate objectives and activities.**

3. **Monitoring student progress throughout the semester.**

4. **Maintaining contact with the agency supervisor to ensure student progress according to the educational plan.**

5. **Reading and evaluating reflective journals of interns or service learning students.**

6. **Reading and evaluating student analytical papers and/or project evaluations.**

7. **Conducting reflective feedback sessions to facilitate the sharing of experiences and increased awareness by students.**

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Many service learning or volunteer projects around the country publish statements of the rights and responsibilities of volunteers. Here are a few examples to consider. They also form a good basis for reflection.

RIGHTS

To be treated as a co-worker.
To be carefully interviewed and carefully assigned.
To know as much as possible about agency organization - policy, people, programs, activities.
To receive orientation, training and ongoing supervision for the job expected.
To receive sound guidance and direction.
To have a variety of field experiences.
To pursue leadership roles.
To voice opinions and to have ideas included in the planning of programs, activities and curricula.
To do meaningful and satisfying work.
To be evaluated and to receive appreciation/credit for service.

RESPONSIBILITIES

To be open and honest at your site from the beginning.
To understand commitments of time and tasks and to fulfill them.
To participate in evaluation when asked to do so.
To share thoughts and feeling with staff, including making your learning objectives clear to people with whom you will be working.
To respect confidentiality.
To seek honest feedback.
To serve as ambassador of goodwill for the project.
To be an effective advocate for change when it is needed.
To enter into service with enthusiasm and commitment.
To keep a journal. Record your observations, analyze your thoughts and, if warranted, translate your thoughts in ACTION.

Role of the Agency Supervisor [1]

The agency supervisor plays a crucial role in determining the value of the field experience to the educational experience of the student. The agency supervisor's role includes:

1. **Planning**: The student's position, project, or other form of assignment should be carefully defined and all parties should have a clear understanding of expectations in terms of productivity and educational growth. Flexibility can be used in this process when necessary.

2. **Orientation**: It is essential that the supervisor give the student information on resources and on the system in which the student hopes to accomplish objectives. The student should be able to answer such questions as: Where do I fit in? How do I get things done? What is expected of me?

3. **Scheduling and assignment**: This should be accomplished with the student. Includes reporting time, dates for initial steps to be taken, deadlines and responsibilities.

4. **Interpretation**: Throughout the assignment, the supervisor should help the student interpret the experience. The student's "expertise" should not be a threat but a contribution. Overcoming a student's inadequacies should be considered a goal in the learning process. Most often, failure in a field experience situation is related not to the job assignment, but to the relationships between people. Close cooperation is necessary among the supervisor, faculty member, and student.

5. **Modeling**: The supervisor often becomes part of the student's image of what it means to be a professional in this field or context. The interpersonal relations that develop between a supervisor and a student can be one of the most significant parts of the student's experience. Taking an interest in the student is therefore beneficial on a number of levels.

6. **Job description**: The student should be cognizant of a specific, detailed job description for the position, including qualifications, responsibilities, time commitment, schedule, orientation procedure, training, transportation requirements, specific conditions, and a description of the agency.

7. **Understanding characteristics of students:**

A. Short term commitment: Service learning situations may range in time from a few hours to an entire semester. Tasks assigned must be possible to accomplish within the time limits of the agreement. What seems like a short-term commitment to one party may seem long term to the other.

B. Students are orientated toward impact: The desire to have "impact" or "make a difference" is a strong motivational force for a student, and can be used by a good supervisor in place of the traditional motivating tools of salary, benefits or position. Also, achievement, responsibility, challenges, and tasks of importance, recognition and advancement are all powerful motivators.

C. Relative freedom: Students can be available for specialized tasks on a short term basis that permanent employees may not have time to accomplish. Sometimes a student's lack of experience can be an opportunity for a fresh, objective look, and present a new approach to a situation.

D. "No one will listen to me!": Students who are used to being told what they will learn in classroom may be hesitant to take initiative by making suggestions in a field experience setting. They need reassurance that their initiative is valued.

E. Educational as well as service goals: Because of the educational goals, the student approaches field experience with a questioning attitude rather than by simply carrying out instructions. This approach could be considered a nuisance, but it's vital to certain types of assignments. A student's desire to know the meaning and implications of actions and programs may cause a student to appear critical. As service learners gain expertise in one task, they may need to be given a new task which will help them continue to develop and grow.

F. Self actualization: Students need help to recognize their own limitations and strengths, and need guidance in setting realistic goals for themselves.

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[1]Adapted by the Center for Service Learning, Pima Community College- West Campus, from Implementing Field Experience Education, *ed. John S. Duley, New Directions in Higher Education, Jossey Bass, No. 6, Summer 1974, pp. 45-54.*

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